DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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Classification/Control Markings

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1. COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)

2. REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

3. TITLE: (U) POLITICAL, HUMAN RIGHTS- Forwarding of Amembassy Memorandum of Conversation concerning Pol. Prisoners

4. PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

5. DATE OF INFORMATION: 781217

6. DATE OF REPORT: 790209

7. DATE & PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 781229, Buenos Aires (b)(3):10 USC 424

8. REFERENCES: (b)(3):10 USC 424

9. ASSESSMENT: SOURCE ____ INFO ____

10. ORIGINATOR: (b)(3):10 USC 424

11. REQUEST EVALUATION ____, QPQ ____ (country)

12. PREPARING OFFICER:

13. APPROVING AUTHORITY: (b)(3):10 USC 424

14. SOURCE: Amembassy Memcon, dtd 781217

15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

DIRC YES ☐ NO ☒

16. SUMMARY:

(U) This IR forwards Amembassy Memo of Conversation concerning political prisoners and human rights in Argentina, as related to Embassy Political Officer Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

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17. SUBJECT AND AREA CODES: 201120 102490 201710 103157 205200

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20. ENCLOSURES:

1 Enclosure
1. Amembassy Memcon, dtd 781217, 1 cy, 5 pgs ~~(C)~~

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21. This IR contains 1 pages.

DD Form 1 SEP 78 1396

1 SEPT 62 EDITION MAY BE USED UNTIL 1 MAR 77

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(b)(3):10 USC 424

DATE: December 17, 1978

SUBJECT : Political Prisoners and Human Rights

(b)(3):10 USC 424;Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

COPIES TO :

ARA/ECA	- Mr. Bumpus	AMB
HA/HR	- Mr. Flood	DCM
INR/RAR	- Mr. Buchanan	POL
ARA	- Mr. Lister	POL/R
INR/OIL/NFAC/ ORPA/LAD	- Mr. Schwab	USICA
U.S. Mission Geneva		ECOM

(b)(3):10 USC 424

Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

Red Cross Operations In Argentina

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) very disappointed with the results of the Red Cross Prison Program in Argentina. A number of months ago he could point to some examples of improvement: better prisoner treatment, more food made available through canteens, sick prisoners being treated, especially brutal guards having been transferred, etc. However, in recent months prison conditions and the treatment of prisoners had reverted to previous standards.

Sec. 3.3(b) (1);Sec. 3.3(b) (6)

He said he did not understand the Argentine

POL:FAHarris:sz
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Encl (1) IR (b)(3):10 USC 424

Military's desire to mercilessly punish the PEN prisoners in jail. He stated the PEN prisoners pose no threat to the government. In almost all cases they are "beaten people."

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) the disappearances were incomprehensible. This was not a savage outpouring of hate such as in Biafra, but a calculated policy. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) the Red Cross had not even received a reply to its listing of several hundred disappeared cases which it had submitted to the Ministry of Interior.

Col. San Roman in the Ministry of Interior had assured the Red Cross that the central government was interested in improving jail conditions. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) a summary of the Red Cross' recommendations for Minister of Interior Harguind guy who was to have held a meeting of prison officials to discuss prison conditions. However, this effort had come to nothing and now the Ministry of Interior was even unable to give the Red Cross assurances regarding the continuation of the entire prison visit program. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) there was strong opposition to the ICRC visits from the Army Corps Commanders. The Red Cross had recently been refused permission to visit prisons at Sierra Chica, Mendoza, San Juan, Cordoba, Olmos and San Nicolas.

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) the most important action to protect the political prisoners in Argentina was the development of written standardized rules to govern prison life. At the present there were no written rules. Each jail and each guard was absolute authority as to prison behavior. Some prisons allowed books, others not; some prisons allowed mail, others not; some prisons allowed visits, others not; some prisons allowed exercise, others not. The inconsistent prison regimes did not make sense from either the government's standpoint, or the detainees'.

Sec. 3.3(b) (1);Sec. 3.3(b) (6)

Army Interrogation Facility

During the Red Cross' recent visit at Villa Devoto, the delegates interviewed 12 recently reappeared men who had been

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members of the Executive Committee of the Partido Comunista Marxista-Leninista (PCML). This group included a number of doctors who had been arrested at the San Justo Housing Project Clinic in April 1978 and Dr. Smith, the Secretary of the Argentine Psychological Society. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) all of these individuals reported that they had been held in three brick chalets located on the Tablada Army Camp near the Bridge No. 12 junction of the Belt Road and the expressway to the airport. They had been severely tortured. One of their members reportedly died from the lack of medical treatment of an infection of the wounds received during his interrogation. The PCML members were taken from the chalets and dropped off on a highway near the interrogation facility. Within a few minutes after their release, they were "arrested" by policemen from Precinct No. 8 where they were taken and booked. They were then transferred to Villa Devoto where they are being held for trial before a military court.

Prison Conditions

Rawson Prison

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) conditions at Rawson have deteriorated drastically. The prison is suffering a financial crisis. Food, which before was barely adequate, is now in low supply; nor was there food or milk powder in the canteen to supplement the diet. The 210 male prisoners being held there are held in two categories instead of three as in the rest of Argentina. Fifty detainees are given the best level of treatment and the others, many of whom are long time prisoners, are held under a hard prison regime. Correspondence for all the PEN prisoners is limited to a one-sheet letter weekly. However, most of the prisoners had neither ink, nor paper and envelopes to write letters.

Resistencia Prison

Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

Some 50 to 55 PEN prisoners are held in Resistencia Prison. A number of these prisoners have been sentenced by military courts to terms of five to 25 years for not very serious charges.

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Cordoba Prison

The Red Cross was refused permission to revisit Cordoba Prison in December. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) told that only 26 political prisoners remain in Cordoba--16 females and 10 males, four or five of whom are married couples. All other PEN prisoners were transferred out of the Third Corps area. The unrecognized political prisoners (Disposicion Authoridades Militares - DAM) whom the Red Cross had visited before reportedly remain in Cordoba. The Red Cross has been informed that some of these DAM prisoners will shortly be freed. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) General Menendez, the Corps Commander, had moved most of the PEN prisoners in response to a Ministry of Interior initiative to transfer them because of the especially bad treatment in Cordoba and Menendez' feeling that his jailers did not control the political prisoners. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) five common law prisoners have just escaped from Cordoba jail.

Ezeiza Prisons

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) had visited three facilities in the Ezeiza area--the Women's Model Prison, Unit 19 and Unit 21. He had received reports that 14 disappeared persons had been held in Unit 19 in the August-September 1978 period.

La Plata Prison

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) La Plata is one of the better run prisons. Prisoners have sufficient proteins and the rules while tough are, in most cases, followed consistently. The major complaint in La Plata is the beatings inflicted on the prisoners for minor infractions of prison rules.

Villa Devoto Prison

Villa Devoto presents a tougher prisoner treatment than in La Plata. There is much more attention to security. The jail is badly overcrowded. Sixty female prisoners have recently been transferred into Villa Devoto from Cordoba. These women have been placed on the severest prison regime and have been mixed with other prisoners.

Coronda Prison

Sec. 3.3(b) (1) Coronda Prison as being one of the Sec. 3.3(b) (1) worst facilities He stated that one of his goals was to have the

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Border Police (Gendarmeria) removed from the prison. He noted that his other goal, in addition to improving jail conditions, was to have the government resurface the clandestine prisoners which they were holding.

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